



## Northeast IPA Workshop Notes



COMMONWEALTH OFFICE  
OF BROADBAND OUTREACH  
AND DEVELOPMENT  
*Promoting a 21st century economy*

**Project:** OBOD Broadband Planning Project  
**Subject:** IPA Workshop Northeast Region

**Workshop Date:** October 30, 2012  
**Time:** 10:00 A.M. EDT  
**Place:** Morehead Convention Center  
Morehead KY

**OBOD Project Team:**

<u>OBOD</u>	<u>KCADD</u>	<u>Baker</u>	<u>SNG</u>
Brian Kiser	Abby Caldwell	Bob Lois	Derek Murphy
Dana Case		Bill Bates	
		Wendall McCarty	

**Project Area Working Group:** Jason Boggs, Gateway ADD (Chair)  
Abby Caldwell, KCADD  
Gail Wright, Gateway ADD  
Kevin Cornette, Buffalo Trace ADD  
Amy Kennedy, Buffalo Trace ADD  
Sherry McDavid, FIVCO ADD  
Kelly Ward, FIVCO ADD

**Attendees:** See "Northeast Region IPA Sign-In Sheet.pdf"

**Presentation Slides:** See "KY OBOD IPA Northeast Region Workshop Presentation 20121024.pdf"

**Acronyms:** ADD = Kentucky Area Development District  
Baker = Michael Baker Jr., Inc.  
BSC = ADD Business Service Coordinators  
COC = Chamber of Commerce  
KCADD = Kentucky Council of Area Development Districts  
MUSB = Morehead University Small Business  
OBOD = Kentucky Office of Broadband Outreach and Development  
ROI = Return on Investment  
SNG = Strategic Networks Group  
SB = Small Business  
SOW = Scope of Work  
MRT = Mountain Rural Telephone

The workshop convened at 10 a.m. Brian Kiser introduced the project team members and working group members before asking attendees to introduce themselves around the room (see sign-in sheet for details). Kiser then provided a brief history of the inception of the Commonwealth Office of Broadband Outreach & Development, including its mission statement, goals, and current involvement in presenting to legislative bodies.

Kiser explained that the purpose of the plans is to identify and engage stakeholders, identify the needs for the region, and engage providers. At this juncture, he wanted to put the power in the hands of the ADDs and regional stakeholders identified by them to allow them to determine what goals and steps are needed and feasible for the region.

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Jason Boggs then presented the Northeast Region Working Group's Scope of Work (SOW) document. Boggs explained that in looking at the data for the area, it became clear that there was a real opportunity to address utilization among small businesses. Subsequently, the group began working with the SBDC through Morehead State University to determine what the needs of small businesses may be. This process is ongoing, but the group would like to create a plan that addresses the needs of small businesses in the area through educational methods suited to the businesses.

Bill Bates then provided some information relating to the project goals, including regional availability, changes in provider participation over the past two years, and data on users, usage, and uses.

Derek Murphy then presented information relating to the regional survey data from March 2012. Murphy then informed the group that the goals for the day's workshop would be creating a vision statement, goals, strategies for achieving those goals, action items, and other strategies for implementing the action plan.

The group took a break and re-convened for a working lunch/group discussion regarding identifying and solving the broadband needs of small businesses in the area. Some key discussions included:

### **KCADD (Abby Caldwell) Notes:**

- Availability of broadband doesn't always translate into customers/users
- Chamber representatives are seeing small businesses that need higher-priced Internet packages to do the processes they would like to adopt.
- Small businesses could benefit from a guide that helps them determine what they need in a broadband connection.
- Affordability for all customers in the area needs to be addressed.
- Various chambers have had positive experiences with face-to-face events with targeted and focused instructional content of interest to the small businesses.
- A mentorship program is needed but must be sustainable. In order to entice participation of mentors, there must be an incentive in place to justify small business owners spending the time to participate.

Bates then thanked the group for their time and input and told them Baker would be working with the OBOD to create an action plan within the next few months for the group to evaluate in the spring of 2013.

### **Baker (Bob Lois) Notes:**

1. Mountain Rural Telephone (MRT) Rep asked about Region household utilization levels.  
Currently provide DSL coverage to area – looking to upgrade to Fiber – Curious about adoption potential.  
They have done some general promotion, but not specifically to Small Businesses (SB).
2. Chamber of Commerce (COC) Rep noted that SBs are saying they need T1.  
She asked if that was fiber. Fiber/DSL/1 was explained.  
MRT noted that T1 is only 1.5 mbps up and down.
3. Morehead University Small Business (MUSB) Rep noted that most folks come in for help on current short term issues – not long term.  
Hard to get folks involved in long term efforts, to be proactive.

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4. COC Rep indicated most issues from members concern getting access to good broadband.  
Noted that she was learning a lot today about options and those members need to be more educated on it.
5. COC noted that they have had more success with specific, more focused seminars rather than general topics.
6. Bill asked MUSB if it would be more effective to provide ROIs on implementation of internet applications.  
MUSB thought it would be.
7. COC noted that they could use technical colleges to provide internet application instruction, but felt it is better received if provided by actual business instructors.
8. COC and MUSB have some different objectives, but they do work together.
9. Derek questioned current use of volunteers for SB outreach/communications.  
MUSB provides some outreach service to SBs, but not using volunteers.  
Discussed Score
10. Derek questioned if there was interest/energy to beef up outreach/education – setup organization for this?
11. ADD questioned coverage maps, but noted that he is aware of the granularity and provider source issues.  
Noted affordability is the big issue, not just BB service, also computer equipment – SBs struggling with this.  
Bill/Derek noted that the SBs need be educated on options: cloud, etc.
12. Derek noted maybe emphasis on underutilized SB – not doing what they could to get most from internet.  
General info mailers may not be sufficient, but rather personal more focused on specific SBs.
13. Derek suggested Program Elements:
  - Provide 1 or 2 educational classes
  - Evaluate connectivity – Adequacy? – If not bump it up to County level.
  - On-Line resources – Noted OBOD contracted for 5 best practices modules. Showed beta cloud module.
14. Abby threw out the idea of considering providing help (maybe rate subsidized) to SBs who in return would come back and mentor other SBs.
15. Add Rep again noted that Affordability is the no. 1 issue in region – low income.  
Also no.1 issue for SBs – can't find the start-up funds.
16. Judge asked what the provider's role would be in promoting use of internet.  
What can they do help ADDs/Counties in this effort.  
Windstream Rep noted that providers are more than willing to participate in BB promotion efforts.  
MRT Rep concurred.
17. Derek noted that non-urban areas typically don't have access to computer support services.  
May want to consider some sort of on-line help resource.  
Place where SBs can also share lessons learned and other knowledge.
18. Discussion on building a list of computer/IT vendors that can provide cost effective help support and education, next steps for SBs – Personal touch.
19. Derek questioned who could provide support consulting services for the regions:  
Volunteers?

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Existing staff?

Noted that work efficiencies could possibly provide more time for existing staff use?

COC noted again that maybe all they need is a list of vendors or where to send people for help with issues.

20. ADD Rep noted that the ADD Business Service Coordinators (**BSC**) could possibly help with internet support.

The BSCs already know and communicate with SBs.

21. General Takeaways

- Hearing the desire to focus on providing means/tools for using current resources
- Provide Educational Instructional resources for general dissemination, but also provide personal touch.

22. Derek noted that typically rural areas don't have local computer/IT businesses to support SB needs.

COC noted they have some, but they are understaffed – not always getting resolved correctly.

23. Derek brought up entrepreneur program – Is there interest in implementing several for Region?

COC asked if it would be open to High School students – Derek questioned maturity.

Other person (from education?) felt there was a maturity issue even with college students - not important to them – Hadn't had much success.

Would definitely need a coach/supervision to help and monitor.

### **Baker (Wendall McCarty) Notes:**

Attendee head count: 13

1. Providers:

- Mountain Rural Telephone
- Windstream
- One attendee late at 10:45

2. Question from Shayne (Mtn. Tele.): Will Bill go over utilization map for this region?

- a. Yes, Bill did this.
- b. Derek commented that building BB infrastructure does not mean positive change or adoption.
- c. Shayne (Mtn. Tele.), they have DSL and Cable Modem, but they are expanding to fiber.

3. Question from one of the Chambers: Cable and DSL are not good enough for their business. Is T1 a fiber technology or what is it?

- a. T1 has speed of about 1.5 Mbps download and upload.

4. What is fixed wireless? Bill and Derek explained.

5. Logan Co. Chamber comments:

- a. They talked about their experience with having training workshops for businesses in their area. They had a very good experience and turn out. They had classes with a specific topic.
- b. Having business people to present/run the training classes works better than a college type class, due to the experience of the business people.

6. Is there interest in training if it's available? Yes.

7. Someone mentioned he does not agree with the accuracy of the coverage maps, because of census block granularity.

8. There is an issue with affordability.

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9. Mentoring program:
  - a. There is difficulty in getting mentors to participate.
  - b. May need incentives for mentors to participate.
10. May be hard for small businesses to get start-up money for internet and training to use it.
11. How does local gov't get technical help they need in order to know what they want to do?
  - a. Where do they get answers?
  - b. Maybe a trade show?
  - c. Is there interest in young entrepreneurs as a resource for providing businesses with help?
  - d. Maybe thru co-ops?
  - e. Maintain as a small group.
  - f. Maybe create environment where co-op will stay in community to help businesses and the co-ops make money.
  - g. Will need close supervision of co-ops.
12. How to sell online could be a module.
13. The 4 ideas for this group to focus on:
  - a. Courses/training
  - b. Mentoring
  - c. Trade Show
  - d. Resources/contacts for help